

NON-FIRE EMERGENCIES

8570

(No. 49 February 2005)

The State of California is often subject to the effects of non-fire emergencies and disasters, both natural and manmade. As a component of its mission to provide service to the public that protects life, communities, property and resources, CDF has participated in the mitigation of those non-fire emergencies and disasters and will continue to do so in the future. Legal authority exists in several places allowing CDF to take action to abate non-fire emergencies.

The [Public Resources Code \(PRC\), Section 713](#) lists the department's responsibilities as including contract fire protection, associated emergency services, and assistance in civil disasters and other non-fire emergencies. [PRC 4114\(b\)](#) requires the rendering of emergency services to the extent that it does not require additional funds. The [Emergency Services Act](#) mandates state agencies to cooperate fully with other agencies (state, local, federal, and private) when directed by the Governor or the Governor's Office of Emergency Services.

CDF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR NON-FIRE RESPONSES

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CDF's responses to non-fire emergency incidents include routine minor incidents, local and state emergencies, and declared presidential disasters. The responsibility for mitigation depends upon the type of non-fire incident. For example, a toxic substance spill other than on a public highway may be the responsibility of the Department of Fish and Game and/or local law enforcement under the Hazardous Materials Incident Contingency Plan. A simple traffic accident with injuries and fire can have several responsible agencies, including law enforcement for the traffic and crime scene, EMS (for medical) and fire (for fire) suppression authorities. Disasters like earthquakes or major floods are not clearly the responsibility of any single agency but will be handled by several agencies depending upon the effects of such disaster. Terrorist incidents create a unique environment in which to manage emergency response. Local responders are typically the first on scene during an actual incident and local government has primary responsibility for protecting public health and safety. Ordinarily, the local first response will be conducted under California's Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) which forms the basis of California's concept of operations for managing any kind of emergency or disaster, including terrorist incidents. The local responders will manage all aspects of the incident until the FBI assumes command, by virtue of its legal authority, of the law enforcement aspects relating to identifying, apprehending, and neutralizing the terrorists and their weapons. Local and state authorities always maintain control of their response resources and continue to operate utilizing SEMS.

CDF may be involved in any phase of a disaster. Disaster response may be as a first responder, during hazard abatement or damage assessment. CDF may continue to participate through the cleanup and recovery stages. In all cases, CDF's role (beyond the first responder) is dependent on the specific request of the responsible state or local agency(s) and its capabilities or under the direction of the Governor. CDF responses will be categorized as initial attack responses to first reports, as responses to mutual aid requests, tasking by the Governor or the Governors Office of Emergency Services, or as assistance-by-hire to responsible agency(s). Coordination of assistance by OES can range from a facilitator's role of communicating requests from various jurisdictions (acting as a resource manager) to requesting mutual aid in response to a Governor's order for signatories of the *Master Mutual Aid Agreement* to provide mutual aid to impacted jurisdictions. Regardless of the extent of CDF's commitment to such incidents, a CDF Agency Representative will be designated.

Emergency response and recovery activities are conducted at the request and under the direction of the affected local government. Some emergency responses are led by designated state agencies. Such agencies have jurisdiction at the state level for those emergencies or disasters. In some cases there may be joint response, requiring a Unified Command for coordinated response between state and local jurisdictions, e.g., hazardous material and nuclear power plant emergencies.

In all cases, CDF employees are to be guided by the general principles of SEMS and remember that the responsible agency should provide an appropriate line officer or agency administrator. In the case of management teams, the CDF Incident Commander (IC) shall take direction from that individual or those individuals. For long term incidents this should be in the form of a written delegation of authority.

LEVELS OF RESPONSE AND DISPATCH CHANNELS **8570.2** (No. 35 September 1994)

In most cases, CDF's first response is as first responder fire agency. Once the scope of the incident is known, CDF's involvement must be based on specific requests from proper authorities, availability of resource and capabilities. Commitment of CDF resources to these incidents shall be through normal dispatch channels. Because CDF staff may also serve as OES Area and Regional Coordinators, CDF Command Centers are reminded to keep this role separate but coordinated with CDF's own dispatching.

Whenever there is a significant commitment of CDF resources to an incident (beyond that of first responder), or it is anticipated the commitment will extend beyond 24 hours, the Deputy Director for Fire Protection will be notified through channels. Under these circumstances, CDF shall also request an OES mission number for this involvement or reach a clear understanding of fiscal responsibility with the soliciting agency. The responsibility for clarifying fiscal responsibility will be the CDF Agency Representative's. (For information on fiscal issues regarding non-fire incidents, see Incident Fiscal/Management [3800](#).)

NON-FIRE FISCAL ISSUES

8570.3

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The department's ability to pay for non-fire incidents is limited by statutory fiscal restrictions. For major involvement, a special PCA reimbursement account must be requested through channels as soon as it is realized that the involvement is significant.

The department shall not assume the responsibility for billing or collecting payment from parties whose acts caused the non-fire incident. That billing function, and any associated legal action to ensure collection rests with the responsible agency(s)

Services and supplies in support of the incident should be directly procured by the agency(s) with primary mission responsibility. If CDF is providing logistical support or staffing for an incident, it should direct the responsible agency(s) to provide purchasing officers/agents to fund incident mitigation and support costs.

For additional information on non-fire fiscal issues, see [Handbook 3800](#).

NON-FIRE SAFETY

8570.4

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The involvement of CDF personnel in certain non-fire disasters poses some concern. Employees may be exposed to situations with which they have had little experience or training. CDF chief officers and supervisors are to be held accountable and responsible for the safety of employees under their direction. In addition to general safety concerns, there are specific legal requirements which must be met before personnel may become involved in some tasks. Incident Commanders must ensure that personnel are qualified to perform assigned tasks. (See [Title 8, Section 5192 of the California Code of Regulations](#).)

CDF EMERGENCY RESOURCES DIRECTORY

8570.5

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Traditionally prepared to meet the resource needs of the more common types of incidents, the CDF Emergency Resources Directory also shall address the special needs of all-risk incidents and include a listing of all employees certified with specific qualifications such as EMT, paramedic, hazmat technician, high angle rescuer, etc.. See [Command and Control Handbook 8100, Section 8131.5](#).

AFTER ACTION REPORT

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A report on the department's activities in assisting in unique non-fire incidents will be of value to future incidents of similar type. Therefore, the CDF Agency Representative will be required to author an After Action Report. The report will be completed within thirty days of the end of CDF's involvement in the incident and forwarded through channels to the Deputy Director for Fire Protection. It is anticipated that these unique non-fire incident reports may include CDF participation in declared disasters, complex hazardous materials incidents, and other multi-agency multi-jurisdictional responses.

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